

Message Text

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15

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5680

INFO USMISSION NATO BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY BUCHAREST

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

C O N F I D E N T I A L BELGRADE 1161

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, YO, UR

SUBJECT: YUGOSLAV KREMLINOLOGY

1. ON THE EVE OF THE 25TH PARTY CONGRESS, YUGOSLAV

KREMLINOLOGISTS ARE CAREFULLY ANALYZING THE SOVIET SCENE
AND THE SOVIETS HERE ARE CAREFULLY WATCHING THEM WATCH.

"POLITIKA'S" MOSCOW CORRESPONDENT BAJALSKI FOUND "PRAVDA"
FEB 14 EDITORIAL'S EMPHASIS ON THE 20TH PARTY CONGRESS AND
FEB 16 "IZVESTIYA" STRESS ON DEMOCRACY HOPEFUL SIGNS. HE
ASSERTED THERE WAS NO EMPHASIS ON 20TH CONGRESS BEFORE THE
24 CONGRESS. A MIDDLE-LEVEL FSFA KREMLINOLOGIST CALLED
POLCOUNS PARTICULARLY TO DRAW HIS ATTENTION TO "PRAVDA"
EDITORIAL AND TO SAY YUGOSLAVS ENCOURAGED BY THIS DEVELOPMENT,
THOUGH THEY RECOGNIZE IT MIGHT BE TACTICAL IN VIEW SITUATION
AMONG WESTERN EUROPEAN COMMUNIST PARTIES.

2. ON OTHER HAND SOVIET EMBASSY OFFICER EXPRESSED TO

US CONSIDERABLE IRRITATION OVER BAJALSKI PIECE AND
OVER YUGOSLAV HABIT OF SEEING NON-EXISTENT DEVELOPMENTS
IN SOVIET UNION. HE SAID WHILE SOVIET AMBASSADOR
STEPAKOV ENCOUNTERED PESSIMISM IN MOSCOW AT
BEGINNING HIS DECEMBER-JANUARY TRIP (PARTICULARLY OVER
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AGRICULTURE AND US-SOVIET RELATIONS), MOOD SUBSTANTIALLY

IMPROVED BY TIME HE LEFT AND STRESS WAS STILL ON CONTINUITY
FOR CONGRESS. THERE WAS NOTHING NEW IN "PRAVDA" PIECE
AND ONLY REASON YUGOSLAVS SAW SOMETHING WAS THAT THEY HAD
MISINTERPRETED 24TH CONGRESS AS PARTIAL RETURN TO
STALINISM. SOVIET EMBOFF CLAIMED HIS LEADERSHIP PARTICULARLY
SENSITIVE TO YUGOSLAV TENDENCY TO SEE WORKERS SELF-
MANAGEMENT AS FUTURE PATH FOR SOVIET UNION. WE HEAR OF
FREQUENT DEMARCHE BY SOVIET EMBASSY ON YUGOSLAV MEDIA
COVERAGE.

3. TITO HAS PERSONALLY RESPONDED TO THIS SENSITIVITY.
IN FEB 1 "VJESNIK" INTERVIEW HE CRITICIZED FACT "SOME
JOURNALISTS DO NOT UNDERSTAND CERTAIN THINGS (ABOUT
SPECIFIC COUNTRIES) AND WRITE IN SUCH A WAY THAT LATER
WE MUST APOLOGIZE THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS" -- TANJUG
DIPLOMATIC EDITOR SAYS TITO NEARLY HAD SOVIETS IN MIND,
SPECIFICALLY, A JOURNALIST FOR "BORBA" TOLD US THAT TITO
HAS ORDERED THAT THERE BE NO SPECULATION IN YUGOSLAV
PRESS ABOUT POSSIBLE LEADERSHIP CHANGES IN SOVIET
UNION. RESULT IS FEB 18 ARTICLE ON 25TH CONGRESS BY
"BORBA" MOSCOW CORRESPONDENT MILINOVIC THAT COULD
EASILY HAVE BEEN WRITTEN BY SOVIET AND WAS PRAISED BY
SOVIET EMBOFF THERE FOR ITS "OBJECTIVITY". NEEDLESS TO
SAY THERE IS CONSIDERABLY LESS CONCERN HERE ABOUT
WESTERN SENSITIVITIES -- WE ARE WORKING TO BRING ABOUT
MORE BALANCE.

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